

OLC 80-1669/B/

26 SEP 1980

Honorable Silvio O. Conte  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Conte:

This letter addresses the issue of United States Government publications, including unclassified Central Intelligence Agency publications, being made available to foreign governments under an international exchange program, authority for which is contained in title 44 of the U.S.C., sections 1718 - 1719.

As the Director of the Central Intelligence I share your concern about the transfer of any information to any country which may prove detrimental to the national security interests of the United States. Indeed, I have spent a great deal of time and effort stressing, in public forums and before Congressional Committees, the importance of limiting the proliferation of sensitive intelligence information.

However, in my opinion, a select, methodical review of material the United States releases would be much more sensible, in terms of the foreign intelligence mission of the United States, than a blanket proscription, of the type you introduced on the House floor as an amendment to the FY 81 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, against any exchange at all with the Soviet Union, Cuba, or Iran.

The procedures which the Central Intelligence Agency has instituted to insure that materials earmarked for the exchange are done so in a manner totally in conformance with the applicable law and sound security practices are quite stringent. No CIA publication is made available to the exchange without having first been: personally reviewed by the Deputy Director of the National Foreign Assessment Center; coordinated with the Department of State and the

National Security Council to the extent that policy matters are involved; and subsequently, but still prior to release, personally reviewed by me. Moreover, I can assure you that the exchange has contributed significantly to our being able to provide our government's policymakers with the kind of information they need to better understand the issues they are faced with on a daily basis. Accordingly, I would urge you to seriously consider the effect of the retention of your amendment in either the continuing resolution currently being discussed by the Congress or in the subsequent permanent legislation to be taken up just prior to the expiration of the continuing resolution.

I salute your efforts to insure that sensitive intelligence information is not subject to unwarranted proliferation.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

cc: Honorable Adam Benjamin, Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Legislative Branch

Honorable Jim Sasser  
Senate Appropriations Committee

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